THE ILLUSIONS OF PROFESSOR BERGSON

Sir Ray Lankester and Mr. H. S. R. Elliot Consider M. Bergson a Blind Leader of the Blind.

The distinguished scientific man who furnishes the preface of **Modern Science and the Illusions of Professor Bergson*** is moved by a twofold conviction: first that Professor Bergson's books in which he formulates his illusions (**Matter and Memory, Time and Free Will,** and **Creative Evolution**) are worthless, confusing, and unprofitable; and secondly that undue importance has been attached to these books by the ingenious and systematic advertisement of M. Bergson on the part of those who amuse themselves with metaphysical curiosities. "To those who in a thoroughgoing way occupy themselves in collecting and comparing and classifying all the absurdities which have been put forward as 'metaphysics' or 'metaphysical speculation' since the days of Aristotle, this latest effusion has, no doubt, a kind of interest such as a collector may take in a curious sort of beetle. To the student of the aberrations and monstrosities of the mind of man, M. Bergson's works will always be documents of value. But it is an injustice as well as an inaccuracy to speak of their author as 'great,' or 'French,' or a 'philosopher.'" The author of the same preface quotes with manifest delight the remark of a certain great lawyer that the self-appointed task of the metaphysician is like that of "a blind man in a dark room hunting for a black cat which—is not there."

Mr. Elliot has undertaken not to furnish a detailed refutation of M. Bergson's philosophy, but to investigate only those portions which profess to be founded on facts. Under this examination Mr. Elliot has become convinced that the Bergsonian philosophy is ingenious, subtle, incomprehensible, and futile; that it is made of airy nothings, of metaphysical verbiage, of metaphors which jump all the ditches. "We find that metaphysical systems in general have a vogue directly proportional to their unintelligibility. That is their only safeguard: to put them into plain language would be to bring them tumbling to the ground."

After an introduction, Mr. Elliot devotes a chapter to a statement of M. Bergson's philosophy, and one to "reasons for dissenting." In the Bergson method, according to Mr. Elliot, three fallacies constantly recur: the "mannikin fallacy," by which the collapse of one or more theories is taken as proof of a rival theory; the false analogy fallacy, "employed **ad nauseam** throughout Bergson's works"; and finally the use of undemonstrated and questionable statements as data for deduction. A further defect of M. Bergson's books, according to Mr. Elliot, is a misuse of language. "Bergson's medium of expression is largely a false coinage: his verbal currency is heavily laden with counterfeits, cunningly made, and demands careful testing before we let them pass."

The other chapters of the book, "The Progress of Philosophy," "The Automaton Theory," "The Origin of Fallacies," and "The True Province of Philosophy" continue the onslaught on M. Bergson and his vitalistic theory. Particularly pithy and interesting is Mr. Elliot's one-page conclusion, in which he states and answers the French metaphysician's fundamental doctrines: (1) that time is a stuff both "resistant and substantial," (2) that consciousness is to some extent independent of cerebral structure, and (3) that instinct leads us to a comprehension of life that intellect could never give.

The question at issue between M. Bergson and Mr. Elliot is too big to debate here. Be it tritely remarked, however, that discussion clears the air. The works of Bergson are unquestionably interesting and suggestive; but his fondness for metaphor and his use of analogy for argument requires that his readers be put on guard. For this reason Mr. Elliot's book will no doubt prove highly useful.

*MODERN SCIENCE AND THE ILLUSIONS OF PROFESSOR BERGSON. By Hugh S. R. Elliot. With a preface by Sir E. Ray Lankester, K.C.B., F.R.S. New York: Longmans, Green & Co. Cloth, pp. xx, 257.

Life of Colonel Thomas Ruffin

(Continued from Page Four.

Sheriff J. W. Biddle, of Craven, who was with him from the beginning of the war to its close, says: "When he made his last charge he said, 'Gentlemen, all that I ask is that you follow me.'" Thousands were characteristic of the man. Bossuet, in his funeral oration on the Prince de Conde, says: "His maxim was, that in the performance of great deeds, one's sole thought should be to perform them well and to leave glory to follow in the train of virtue. It was this which he has endeavored to instill into others and by this principle has he himself ever been guided. Thus false glory has no temptations for him. It was with truth and greatness alone that he was concerned. Thus it came about that his glory was wrapped up in the service of the King and the happiness and well being of the State; they were the objects nearest his heart. These were his first and most cherished desires." These words will well apply to Colonel Ruffin, for he loved the South and manifested his love by pouring out his life blood in her defense. At any time during the Civil War when the black clouds of Northern oppression were lowering over the South and disasters were gathering on every hand, in order to have removed them he could have uttered the prayer of the Grecian combatant when "enveloped in unnatural clouds and darkness" with perfect sincerity and truth,

"Dispel this cloud, the light of heaven restore,
Give me to see, and Ajax asks no more."

A philosophical writer and an eminent historian has said: "Patriotism always exists in the greatest degree in rude nations and in an early period of society. Like all other affections and possessions it operates with the greatest force where it meets with the greatest difficulties. It seems to be a virtue which grows from opposition, which subsists in its greatest vigor amidst turbulence and dangers, but in a state of ease and safety, as if wanting its appropriate nourishment, it languishes and decays. We must not then wonder at that difference of patriotic character, which distinguishes the Greeks in the early ages of their history, from that by which they were known in their more advanced and, illustrious periods." If these principles be true, it is therefore not strange that the South being the weaker section and her people feeling, that it was necessary for each individual to rally to the defence of the country, like a strong son in defence of his mother, that there should have been such a general diffusion of the patriotic spirit and the love of ingenuous freedom and that there should have been exhibited such a noble spirit of romantic gallantry, such a patient endurance of privation and suffering, such utter contempt for dangers in every form, for such a brilliant exhibition of heroic valor and for such a disinterested devotion to the spirit of liberty, which they displayed on so many occasions during the Civil War. "It has been said to be a law of nature that the rising opulence and grandeur of a nation must be balanced by the decline of its heroic virtues." The government of the United States being rich and powerful and her people revelling in opulence and luxury, they thought that the government was able to maintain itself and that there was no necessity for any extraordinary effort on the part of the individual, hence there were no such brilliant exhibitions of lofty patriotism and chivalric courage as was manifested in the South. Even the Southern women felt that it was necessary for them to aid in the struggle and they performed deeds and endured privations with a patience and fortitude that would have done honor to the Spartan women or to the ladies of the Netherlands. A gallant chronicler in describing the struggle of the people of the Netherlands in the 16th century, under William the Silent, Prince of Orange, to throw off the yoke of Spanish oppression under Philip the Second, says: "Young virgins were clustered at every window, roof and balcony, their bright robes floating like summer clouds above them. Loftily from those lovely clouds descended the gentle rain of flowers. Garlands were strown before their feet and laureled victory sat upon their brow." Genius and patriotism have ever found a sure and lasting reward in woman. In every effort for the melioration of suffering humanity, in every struggle for liberty woman has always been in the front of the movement. Now that the Union has been cemented by the blood of our fathers and brothers in closer bonds, may we realize what Webster said in his great speech in the Senate on the 7th of March, 1850, when he described the grandeur of the Republic. He said: "This Republic now extends with a vast breadth across the whole continent. The two great seas of the world wash the one and the other shore. We realize on a mighty scale the beautiful description of the ornamental border of the buckler of Achilles."

"Now the broad shield complete the artist crowned,
With his last hand and poured the Ocean round;
In living silver seemed the waves to roll
And beat the buckle's verge and bound the whole."

C. S. WOOTEN.

Evil Survivals of Sectionalism

(Continued from Page Twelve.)

But, with all this evidence before their eyes, Northern writers are stereotyping it in our literature that the North's "superior humanity" forced the "Missouri Compromise" on "the lower civilization of the South."

The Real "Wedge."

After the enactment of laws to enable New England to prosper at the expense of the South, it became supremely important to New Englanders to maintain the then existing balance between the two sections of the Union; and their opposition to an "expansion" of the South, which led them in the first Congress, as Maclay tells us, to oppose the passage of a naturalization bill, was the sole cause of our long and disgraceful sectional quarrel, as is admitted by honest and intelligent Northern writers. Here are some of their admissions:

1. In Bancroft's "History of the United States" he says: "An ineradicable dread of the coming power of the Southwest lurked in New England, especially Massachusetts."

2. One of the demands of the notorious Hartford Convention was that the Constitution be so amended that "no State be admitted into the Union except by a two-thirds vote of both Houses of Congress."

3. In Richard Hildreth's "History of the United States" he says: "Jealousy of Southern domination had, as we have seen, made the Northern Federalists dissatisfied with the purchase of Louisiana. The keeping out of new States and the alteration of the Constitution as to the basis of representation were projects too hopeless as well as too unpopular in their origin to be expected. The extension to the new territory west of the Mississippi of the ordinance of 1787 against slavery seemed to present a much more feasible method of accomplishing substantially the same object. The idea, spreading with rapidity, still further obliterated old party lines."

4. Agreeing with Hildreth, Josiah Quincy, of Massachusetts, said in a letter to Timothy Pickering, a Massachusetts Senator: "The influence of our part of the Union must be diminished by the acquisition of more weight at the other extremity."

Conclusion.

Now, in conclusion, let me remind the reader that during our long sectional debate not even the most unscrupulous of the South's critics has ever charged that any individual, corporation or State in the South ever asked for an unfair share of the public property or of the money in the Federal Treasury, and the conclusion is unavoidable that avarice, justified by an assumption of moral superiority, was the "wedge" which divided this country into hostile sections; and to this add the fact that by 1860 the expanded and expanding North had deprived the South of every vestige of hope for the blessings which were promised in the preamble of the "Constitution of the more perfect Union"—the establishment of "justice," the insuring of "domestic tranquility," the promotion of "the general welfare," and the securing of "the blessings of liberty" to all generations of the people.

E. F. GRADY.

The Services of John M. Morehead

(Coninued from Page Eleven.)

will be a corporation worthy of you, of your State, and of the great destinies that await it."

What this great destiny was no man had foreseen so clearly as he. The traveler of 1912 along the line of the North Carolina Railroad sees the fulfillment of Morehead's dreams of 1850. He finds himself in one of the most productive regions of the new world. He is hurled from one end of it to the other at a speed of forty miles an hour, surrounded by every comfort and convenience of modern travel. He traverses a region bound together by a thousand miles of steel rails, by telegraph and telephone lines, and by nearly two thousand miles of improved country roads. He finds a population engaged not only in agriculture, but in manufacturing, in commerce, in transportation, and in a hundred other enterprises. Instead of a few old-fashioned handlooms turning out annually less than $400,000 worth of "home-made" articles, he hears the hum of 360 modern factories operating two millions of spindles and looms by steam, water, electricity, employing more than fifty millions of capital, and sending their products to the uttermost ends of the earth. His train passes through farm lands that, since Morehead began his work have increased six times in value, that produce annually ten times as much cotton and seventy-five times as much tobacco. From his car window instead of the 466 log huts that passed for schoolhouses in 1850, with their handful of pupils, he beholds a thousand modern schoolhouses perched on every hillside, alive with the energy and activity of one hundred thousand school children. His train hurls him from Goldsboro through Raleigh, Durham, Burlington, Greensboro, High Point, Lexington, Salisbury, Concord, Charlotte—villages that have grown into cities, old fields and cross-roads that have become thriving centers of industry and culture. Better than all else, he finds himself among a people, no longer characterized by their lethargy, isolation, and ignorance, but bristling with energy, alert to every opportunity, fired with the spirit of the modern world, and with their faces steadfastly set toward the future.

The foundation on which all this prosperity and progress rests is the work done by John M. Morehead or inspired by him. No well-informed man can be found today in North Carolina who will dispute his primacy among the railroad builders of the State. The North Carolina Railroad, the Atlantic and North Carolina Railroad, the Western North Carolina Railroad, the connecting link between the North Carolina and the Richmond and Danville railroads from Greensboro to Danville, all bear witness of his supremacy in this field. In one of the finest passages of his message to the General Assembly of 1842 he urged the building of good country roads; today there are 5,000 miles of improved rural highways in North Carolina. He recommended the building of a great central highway from Morehead City through Raleigh to the Tennessee line; today we have just witnessed the completion of the great State Highway piercing the very heart of the State almost along the very route he suggested seventy years ago. He suggested plans for extensive improvements of our rivers and harbors; today a "thirty-foot channel to the sea" has become the slogan of our chief port and the national government is spending annually hundreds of thousands of dollars in the improvement of the Cape Fear, the Neuse, the Pamlico and other rivers of Eastern North Carolina. He urged the construction by the national government of an inland waterway for our coastwise vessels through Pamlico Sound to Beaufort Harbor; seventy years have passed since then, this enterprise has become national in its scope, the Federal government has assumed charge of it, and the whole nation is anticipating the completion in the near future of an inland waterway from Maine through Pamlico Sound and Beaufort Harbor to Florida. First of all our statesman Morehead realized the possibility of establishing at Beaufort a great world-port; and although this dream has not yet been realized, there are not lacking today men noted throughout the business world for their practical wisdom, inspired by no other purpose than commercial success, who have not hesitated to stake large fortunes on the ultimate realization of this dream also. A twentieth-century statesman sent before his time into the world of the nineteenth century, Governor Morehead, as a distinguished scholar has declared, "would have been more at home in North Carolina today than would any other of our ante-bellum Governors. He has been dead forty years, and they have been years of constant change and unceasing development. But so wide were his sympathies, so vital were his aims, so far-sighted were his public policies, and so clearly did he forsee the larger North Carolina of schools, railroads, and cotton mills, that he would be as truly a contemporary in the twentieth century as he was a leader in the nineteenth."

LAW ON ISLE OF MAN.

Imparted to Deemsters and Kept Secret During Their Service.

(Harper's Weekly.)

The Isle of Man presents many curious features, none of which are more curious than its laws. For instance, the Legislature is called the House of Keys and was in other times a judicial body charged with the duty of interpreting the laws. Any person so bold as to slander this House of Keys was liable not only to a fine in the amount of £10 but to the loss of both his ears.

Two Deemsters were once appointed to execute the laws which before the year 1417 were uncodified, and these were known as Breast Laws for the reason that they were imparted to the Deemsters in secret, to be kept by them within the secrecy of their own breasts as long as they chose or during their whole service, though they were authorized to impart and explain to the populace as much of these special laws as should at any time seem wise and expedient.

Certain of the Manx laws, as set down after the codification, are extremely quaint. Here are a couple of extracts from the Manx legal rulings:

"If a man steal a horse or an ox it is no felony, for the offender cannot hide them; but if he steal a capon or a pig he shall be hanged."

"In case of theft, if it amount to the value of sixpence halfpenny it shall be felony and death to the offender; and under that value to be whipped or set upon a wooden horse which shall be provided for such offenders."

The arms of the Isle of Man, which, though it may sound like an Irish bull to say so, are legs—three legs bent at the knee and apparently kicking outward from a common center in the midst of a shield—have provoked a number of jocular descriptions, of which the best declares that one leg spurns Ireland, one kicks at Scotland and the third kneels to England.

On July 5th of every year the laws of the Isle of Man are still read aloud to the assembled people from the top of Tynwald Hill. This is said to be the most interesting and archaic legal ceremony observed today in Europe.

Bryce Among the Best Sellers.

The Honorable James Bryce's book of travel, South America: Observations and Impressions, has had four large printings since its appearance a few weeks ago. It is said to be one of the best selling books of its kind ever published. Some one recently made a jest that if the present state of affairs continues, as there is every reason to believe it will, there is grave danger of Mr. Bryce's being listed among the best sellers.